

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PRS-01 H-02 SCCT-01 DHA-02 SSO-00

NSCE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15

SP-02 SS-15 NSC-05 L-03 PM-03 SY-05 USSS-00 /086 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:MHVAN ORDER

APPROVED BY NEA/P:MHVAN ORDER

S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH (INFO)

H - MISS FOLGER (INFO)

EUR/P - MR. JERABEK

S/CCT - MR. FEAREY (INFO)

----- 049251

O 032054Z JUL 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY

CINCEUR IMMEDIATE

SECDEF

UNCLAS STATE 157851

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING -- DISAPPEARANCE OF
COLONEL MORGAN IN BEIRUT

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

SECDEF FOR OSD/PA

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING JULY 3, 1975:

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING NEW ON COLONEL MORGAN?

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A. NO, WE DO NOT HAVE ANYTHING FURTHER ON COLONEL MORGAN.

THERE HAVE BEEN NO FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS. OUR EMBASSY IS CONTINUING ITS EFFORTS WITH THE LEBANESE AUTHORITIES TO ASCERTAIN HIS WHEREABOUTS.

Q. DO YOU KNOW HOW LONG HE HAD BEEN IN BEIRUT AT THE TIME OF HIS ABDUCTION?

A. HE HAD ARRIVED -- LET ME JUST CHECK SOME DETAILS -- IN BEIRUT FROM PAKISTAN ON PAN AMERICAN FLIGHT NUMBER 1 ON THE MORNING OF JUNE 29TH. AND YOU WILL RECALL THAT HE WAS SCHEDULED TO DEPART FOR ANKARA ON THE SAME FLIGHT THE NEXT MORNING.

AND YESTERDAY, WE INDICATED THAT HE WAS REPORTEDLY KIDNAPPED ON JUNE 29TH TOWARD THE END OF THE DAY. WE UNDERSTAND THAT HE HAD TAKEN A TAXI TO GO TO THE AIRPORT TO BUY SOME READING MATERIAL AND WAS ON HIS WAY BACK TO THE HOTEL.

Q. TAKING A TAXI -- TO GO TO THE --

Q. CAN YOU CLARIFY THAT PLEASE? TAKING A TAXI TO GO TO THE AIRPORT TO BUY READING MATERIAL, AND WAS ON HIS WAY BACK TO THE HOTEL?

A. YES, WAS ON HIS WAY BACK.

Q. THAT IS, HE HAD COME IN FROM -- TO TOWN FROM THE AIRPORT THAT MORNING.

A. THAT MORNING --

Q. AND WAS GOING BACK OUT TO THE AIRPORT -- THEN TO GO BACK TO THE HOTEL?

A. YES.

Q. THEN TO GO BACK OUT TO THE AIRPORT THE NEXT DAY?

A. RIGHT.
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BUT THE QUESTION, I THINK -- ON BACKGROUND -- MY UNDERSTANDING WAS THAT ON THAT DAY THERE WERE NO OTHER NEWS STANDS OPEN, AND THE AIRPORT WAS THE LOGICAL PLACE TO GO.

Q. THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF REPORTS THAT HE WAS WARNED NOT TO TAKE THAT PARTICULAR ROUTE TO THE AIRPORT, AND THAT HE GOT INTO AN ARGUMENT IN WHICH HE RAISED HIS VOICE

AND REPORTEDLY SAID SOMETHING ABOUT HIS MISSION BEING THERE TO "ARM THE RIGHT WING PHALANGE" -- DO YOU --

A. WELL, THAT IS JUST A BUNCH OF BALONEY.

I DO NOT HAVE THE DETAILS ABOUT ANY ARGUMENT, BUT IT IS VERY CLEAR THAT HE WAS IN BEIRUT OVERNIGHTING WITH MEMBERS OF A CENTO DELEGATION RETURNING FROM PAKISTAN TO ANKARA. HE IS ASSIGNED TO THE JOINT U.S. MILITARY MISSION IN TURKEY.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY CONFIRMATION THAT HE WAS WARNED NOT TO TAKE THAT PARTICULAR ROUTE TO THE AIRPORT -- WHICH

APPARENTLY WENT PAST SEVERAL PALESTINIAN CAMPS?

A. I DO NOT HAVE ANY CONFIRMATION OF THAT.

THERE WAS A LOT OF TROUBLE IN BEIRUT ON THAT DAY BUT I DO NOT THINK THERE ARE MANY ROUTES TO THE AIRPORT. I THINK THERE IS ONE PRINCIPAL ROUTE, TO MY RECOLLECTION.

Q. HAS THERE BEEN NO RANSOM DEMAND?

A. WE HAVE HEARD NOTHING.

Q. ANY ACCUSATIONS FROM ANY FACTION IN LEBANON?

A. WE HAVE HAD NOTHING.

Q. DO YOU KNOW WHAT HOTEL HE WAS STAYING IN?

A. YES, PAN AMERICAN PUT HIM, AND HIS COLLEAGUES, IN A UNCLASSIFIED

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HOTEL CALLED THE NEW MELKART.

Q. WHO WERE HIS COLLEAGUES?

A. THEY WERE OTHER OFFICERS WHO HAD BEEN ATTENDING THE CENTO EXERCISE.

Q. WERE THEY AMERICANS, OR?

A. THERE MAY HAVE BEEN AMERICANS. THERE WERE ALSO ALLIED OFFICERS.

Q. WHY DID THEY STOP IN BEIRUT? IS THERE NO DIRECT FLIGHT?

A. I WOULD ASSUME, ALTHOUGH I DO NOT HAVE SPECIFIC LANGUAGE, THAT IT WAS IN THEIR EFFORTS TO PROCEED FROM ISLAMABAD TO ANKAARA.

Q. YOU SAID THEY WERE TAKING THE SAME FLIGHT THE NEXT DAY -- PAN AM 1.

A. ON BACKGROUND, I DO NOT KNOW THAT PAN AM NO. 1 GOES EVERY DAY FROM ANKARA TO BEIRUT. I DO NOT KNOW WHY THEY WERE TRANSITING IN BEIRUT.

THEY WERE PUT IN THE HOTEL BY PAN AMERICAN AS PASSENGERS IN TRANSIT, ACCORDING TO MY INFORMATION. THAT IS ALL ON BACKGROUND.

Q. DO YOU PLAN TO BE IN TOUCH WITH, MAYBE, THE PALESTINIAN ORGANIZATIONS ABOUT THIS CASE?

A. WE HAVE NO INDICATION OF THE IDENTITY OF ANY ORGANIZATION.

IN ANY CASE, WE ARE IN TOUCH WITH THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT, AND THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT IS MAKING EVERY EFFORT POSSIBLE TO LOCATE COLONEL MORGAN.

Q. WHAT HE ASKED IS WHETHER YOU WERE IN TOUCH WITH THE UNCLASSIFIED

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PALESTINIAN ORGANIZATIONS.

A. WE ARE IN TOUCH WITH THE LEBANESE AUTHORITIES.

Q. ONLY THE LEBANESE AUTHORITIES?

A. YES.

Q. DOES THAT INCLUDE INFORMAL CONTACTS WITH EMBASSY PERSONNEL?

A. I KNOW OF NO OTHER CONTACTS EXCEPT WITH THE LEBANESE AUTHORITIES. INGERSOLL

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